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HOUSE FURNISHINGS

Excerpts from 1925 Annual Reports of
State and County Extension Agents

Compiled by M. C. Wilson



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Extension Service.....C.W. WARBURTON *Director*

Office of Cooperative Extension Work.....C.B. SMITH *Chief*

Washington, D. C.

1875

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Compiled by M. C. Wilson, In Charge, Extension Studies,
Office of Cooperative Extension Work

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Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics
United States Department of Agriculture and
State Agricultural Colleges Cooperating

HOUSE FURNISHINGS*

Alabama

The women of the Hamburg club, inspired by the material sent out by the Better Homes Bureau, decided to give an informal better-homes tea, and a committee was appointed to work out the plans. The plans were presented to the club at the next meeting and approved.

A picture show was given, the proceeds of which were used to defray the expense of the tea. The most ideal home in the community was selected for the tea, and each club member contributed from her home whatever was needed to make the demonstration home more ideal. The local merchants lent rugs and small pieces of furniture.

The day before the tea the club met, cleaned the house, and arranged the furniture. The dining table was set for a four-course luncheon with all the silver and china set for the first course. Several men, 50 women, and 12 club girls attended the tea. A committee met the guests and took them to the living room, guest room, bathroom, bedroom, nursery, and across the hall into the dining room and kitchen. A woman was in each room to explain its contents, and to bring out such points as color harmony, balance, and arrangement. Club girls served punch and wafers to the guests on the back porch.

Numerous changes and improvements in homes can be traced directly to this meeting. It showed people that many things of convenience can be made at little expense. The men who attended the tea were favorably impressed. One man was influenced to change the plan of a house he was to build.

One woman who attended the better-homes tea asked the agent to come to her home and show her how to arrange the parlor. This parlor became a living room after the rearrangement.

The walls of houses have been freed somewhat from numerous calendars, mantelpieces have been cleared, and windows have been properly curtained. One might say that a movement has been made toward "more home and less house."-Elizabeth S. DeLony, Home Demonstration Agent, Marion, Perry County.

California

Eight "old" counties are continuing to show creditable results in the home-furnishings project. In the older centers in Imperial, Kern, Kings, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, and San Joaquin Counties the project is in the campaign stage. In the newer centers, it is still necessary to locate new demonstrations, hold project-leader meetings, and do more follow-up work. The specialist visits all the centers in each county once, or more, if necessary, each year to help the agents with the more difficult problems, and to plan additional demonstrations in the project. The one visit each year keeps the specialist in touch with the county activities and allows more time to be devoted to counties beginning the project.

*No attempt is made to cite all references to house furnishings in this circular. Only selected extracts showing typical methods employed and results obtained in a number of States are included. Owing to differences in terminology used in the different States and to other local conditions, the information contained in this circular should be reviewed by the State subject-matter specialist concerned before incorporating any part of it in the extension plans for the State.

Sacramento County's home demonstration part of the farm-bureau travel conference was "home furnishings." One demonstration home was selected, not because it was the best in the county, but because of its location and ability to accomodate the crowd, and as a good example of the type of work being carried on. All the fundamental principles of the treatment of walls, floors, floor coverings, and woodwork had been followed. Curtains, draperies, pictures, ornaments, and other accessories had been selected and arranged so as to achieve a restful, colorful, attractive atmosphere in this farm home. The house had been done over according to the plans made by the specialist at previous demonstration meetings. In addition to viewing the rooms and having the owner tell of the demonstration before and after the work was done, a project-leader meeting was conducted in the yard. At this demonstration a dining-room table, a chair, and an iron bed were refinished. Other pieces of furniture in the various stages of refinishing were exhibited and explained by the project leader. The men present were greatly interested in the entire demonstration.

As San Diego County was the first to start the home-furnishings project it is interesting to check the annual reports and find that the standard of quality as well as quantity has been kept up. For more than four years the work has occupied a large part of the program in the meetings or as follow up. As a result, the living conditions on the farms in the county have been greatly improved. The specialist made one visit to the county to check some of the work and to plan new demonstrations. Color demonstrations were held in each center. In June the agent followed up the work, touching on all phases of the project and reviewing various methods given from time to time. The following résumé of the goals and results for the year will show how the interest continues:

Goals:

- Hold 16 demonstration meetings.
- Enroll 13 demonstrators.
- Have 100 adopt suggestions.
- To reach 50 new homes.
- To have 30 rooms done over.
- To have 40 pieces of furniture done over.
- To have 100 accessories made.

Results:

- 24 demonstration meetings held.
- 7 demonstrators enrolled.
- 231 adopted suggestions.
- 50 new homes reached.
- 92 rooms done over.
- 143 pieces of furniture re-finished.
- 297 accessories made.

The home-furnishing exhibit at the San Diego County fair was planned by the specialist to be home lighting in relation to home furnishing. The technical part of the exhibit was worked out by the extension specialist in agricultural engineering. The idea of this exhibit was to give people a better understanding of the fundamental principles involved in good lighting as well as a better understanding of the reflection and absorbing qualities of color, or the part played by the backgrounds in room lighting. This was one of the best exhibits put on at the fair.

Solano County has been carrying on home furnishing as a major project with the following results:

- 35 method demonstrations conducted.
- 446 attended method demonstrations.
- 2 project-leader meetings held.
- 26 attended project-leader meetings.
- 36 result demonstrations held.
- 280 attended result demonstrations.
- 96 homes visited.

In February the specialist and home demonstration agent planned dining rooms and bedrooms in each center. Later they held room-planning demonstrations in homes where construction work was contemplated. As a result, plans for remodeling several houses were drawn by the specialist. Fifty-one homes and three community demonstrations were visited by the specialist and home demonstration agent in one series of home visits.

Other types of demonstration meetings were as follows: Room and furniture arrangement; refinishing furniture; picture selection and framing; lamp shades; book ends; and covered boxes. - J. L. F. Decker, Home Furnishing Specialist, College of Agriculture, University of California, Berkeley.

History: In November 1922 the program of work in all the nine centers included home furnishings. A plan of work following the agricultural extension demonstration methods was prepared. In September, 1923, 18 demonstration homes were started and continued into 1925. Two demonstrations have been finished and two lost because the families moved away. Most of the home furnishings plans are made to extend over a period of several years, owing to the amount of money required.

Object: To make the home a more attractive place in which to live.

Goals:

- (1) To hold one project-leader meeting on lamp shades.
- (2) To hold one project-leader meeting on book ends.
- (3) To hold one project-leader meeting in addition to color wheel.
- (4) To hold one project-leader meeting on picture framing.
- (5) To hold one project-leader meeting to review all processes.
- (6) To hold 30 demonstration meetings.
- (7) To have project-leaders hold 28 demonstration meetings.
- (8) To make 36 home visits.
- (9) To have 28 home demonstrators who started in 1924 continue.
- (10) To have 50 homes make changes.
- (11) To have 75 adopt some suggestions.
- (12) To reach 20 new homes.

Activities: Much has been done in the home-furnishing project by women in all the centers. This project is really in the campaign stage for the women know how to work to get the proper backgrounds, such as wall coverings, woodwork, and floors; how to refinish their furniture; and how to make suitable accessories, such as curtains, lamp shades, book ends, and table coverings. All are anxious to carry out the ideas and suggestions gained from the project and will do so as soon as the money is available.

In November 1924, the specialist held a project-leaders' meeting on lamp shades, and in December one on book ends. The lamp shades were inexpensive but very effective and useful, being made mostly of cretonne, chintz, and voile. The leaders went back to their centers and held 10 follow-up meetings with a total attendance of 532.

Other demonstration meetings were on furniture arrangement and color work. The dyeing meetings applied to home furnishings as well as clothing. The women reported having dyed curtains, spreads, and so forth.

The specialist in home furnishings returned to the county in November, 1925, to check the work done since her last visit, which was a year ago, and to plan other homes desiring her help. At this round of meetings she talked on color and room analysis. Six new demonstrations were started.

The goals reached in this project are as follows:

- 1 project-leader meeting held on lamp shades.
- 1 project-leader meeting held in addition to color wheel.
- 39 demonstration meetings held.
- 28 project-leader meetings held.
- 69 home visits made.
- 26 home demonstrators continued.
- 6 new demonstrators started.
- 103 made changes.
- 158 adopted suggestions.
- 49 new homes reached.

Mrs. Bernstein, a home demonstrator in Hardwich center, finished her work which consisted of enlarging her living room, building a sleeping porch, doing over the walls and woodwork in three rooms, and providing new floor coverings for two rooms. Further suggestions were given for color and picture arrangement.

There are many other demonstrations which have not yet been completed. Mrs. Freeman, in Guernsey center, has done over her whole upstairs and plans to do over her living room. Other results which have been reported are as follows:

- 30 bedrooms done over.
- 25 living rooms done over.
- 26 dining rooms done over.
- 19 other rooms done over.
- 54 pieces of furniture refinished.
- 406 accessories made.

45 pairs of curtains dyed.- Ada Lee Day, Home Demonstration Agent, Hanford, Kings County.

Florida

Although home improvement is a definite phase of the work for which I am directly responsible, I have tried to limit it rather than encourage too much of it at the expense of other vital work. In order that a better plan may be worked out to extend the teaching power of the county home demonstration agents, I have encouraged the working in large groups, with a local demonstrator in charge to encourage and assist others in the community, who may be taking up this phase of work.

A "working bee" is an all-day affair, being held in the home of the woman who will act as the demonstrator in home improvement for that community. A week previous to the meeting all members meet at the home of the demonstrator and, before any improvement is attempted, score the room, rooms, or premises. Everything is well planned in advance so that the whole demonstration may be finished by the group workers in the one day. Each club member brings a part of the lunch and a

drink is served by the hostess. The lunch hour is a delightful social part of the day. If things are well planned in advance it is remarkable how much can be accomplished. The club members and the neighbors who visit the demonstration are so inspired that they soon begin to copy it.

For a living room, dining room, or bedroom demonstration, the following suggestions are given for group workers to be used at "working bees."

Group 1 - Make curtains.

Group 2 - Make draperies or curtains.

Group 3 - Tying and dyeing draperies, sofa pillows, chair covers, or chair bottoms, and head rests, or draperies for a vanity.

Group 4 - Enameling accessories for the dresser and mantle.

Group 5 - Passe-partout pictures.

Group 6 - Make insets for screen frames.- Virginia F. Moore,

Assistant Home Demonstration Leader, Experiment Station, Gainesville.

Illinois

The object of the home-furnishings project is as follows:

- (1) To give home makers joy and satisfaction in the things they use, by familiarizing them with the principles underlying "good taste" in the selection and arrangement of furnishings in the home.
- (2) To evoke a desire in leaders to put forth their best efforts toward community improvements.

The principal problem attacked in 1925 was bringing art closer to the lives and within the reach of the average person. Realizing that art has had to be sought for the past years, there is a demand for bringing these ideals near enough to become essential in the surroundings. "Necessity is the mother of invention." The lack of illustrative material had led the specialist to tie up her attempts with the commercial firms. In many ways "correlation of art and industry" has had a beginning, as follows:

- (1) Open meetings using artistic illustrative material in local stores.
- (2) Cooperative work with wholesale house, by going with buyer to wholesale house and selecting drapes from the standpoint of "color and design."
- (3) Drapery buyer from mail-order house observing at local-leaders' training meeting so he might keep in touch with the women's point of view.
- (4) Cooperative work with the merchants of Champaign, Ill., in furnishing "Warm Air Heating Research Residence," Urbana, Ill., during better homes week, May 11 to 17, 1925.

Organizations: In a county where there is an organized home bureau there is a home furnishing chairman who works with a committee made up of a chairman from each unit and the home adviser. The home furnishing specialist works with this committee in planning a six month's program which is submitted to the advisory council, in that county, which may suggest any changes desired in the program.

The specialist trains the local leaders, who alternate with the home demonstration agent in presenting the subject matter to the units.

The following is the method of procedure of the project:

- (1) General meetings.
- (2) Training meetings for local leaders.
- (3) Result demonstrations.
- (4) Home visits.
- (5) Minor projects.
- (6) Girls 4-H club room improvement.

General meetings: A series of general or open meetings were usually held in the beginning of a six months' program of work. They were held in different parts of the county, and as many as possible in local furniture stores where the local illustrative material was used. In these meetings the specialist attempted to give an interesting and practical view of decorating a room or home from the presentation of the use of the principles underlying interior decoration. These meetings were to create enthusiasm and inspire interest for the program which followed. If the county continued the second six months' program of work, another series of general meetings were held at the end of that time in which any questions on home furnishing could be asked and a general discussion given.

Local-leader meetings: Realizing that there can be a greater spread of influence in a community through the development of leaders, an effort has been made to train women who are chosen as representatives from each unit. Usually two women, leader and subleader, come to local-leader training meetings to take the subject matter back to their respective units. These training meetings are usually all-day meetings in which the specialist gives an illustrated talk in the morning. In the afternoon, the local leaders apply the information gained in making illustrative material to be used at their unit meeting. Definite illustrative material as posters, charts, fabrics, and pictures were made or selected, hoping to make the subject matter easier to present to others.

Local-leader training meetings are proving more and more successful. This is shown by the full attendance from every unit for the entire program of six months. The interest is in not only what is good but what is the best and most practical way to "put it across."

Result demonstrations: At present there are six county-wide result demonstrations being worked on, or have been finished. The policy is to run a program of six months and if possible after that time, have a definite application of these theories put into practice in a home or public building which can be open to inspection by the entire county. In every case an urgent request has been made to have the completed demonstration open one day as "open house" for all visitors who wish to see the result.

These result demonstrations are not only a means of letting the people see theory put into practice, but are a means of giving publicity and instigating more interest in home-bureau work.

Home-visits: The specialist made 31 home visits to private homes over the State to give the desired information on such phases of home furnishings, as finish for walls or ceilings, ideas for draperies, and furniture rearrangement. Only special visits made by the specialist have been recorded. It has been mentioned that the home demonstration agent makes the majority of home visits as she is in a position to know the personality of the home maker, which is as essential as to apply the principles of decorations.

Minor projects: After a program has been followed for six months and the county takes up the study of another subject, as clothing, food, and so forth, a minor project in home furnishing is used to take only a small time of their meeting, and thus interest in the former program is kept.

Room improvement: The home furnishing specialist worked in cooperation with the girls' 4-H club specialist in presenting the room-improvement project. Local leaders were trained for the junior work just as the home bureau local leaders. A special room-improvement club notebook has been prepared for each girl to use as a record book and a laboratory manual.

Miscellaneous: Time has been given to home advisers in the various counties in planning illustrative material for the subjects presented by them. This not only ties up the subjects but presents different illustrative material and uses of principles underlying interior decoration, color, design, unity, proportion, rhythm, and balance. A radio talk on the subject "making a house a home" was given.

Measuring results: Reports from local leaders at each training school and from the unit meetings are the means of summarizing the work on the project. The following are from some of the reports:

"Home furnishings was one of the main projects in 1925. It proved so popular that the advisory council desired to continue it for six months longer.

From a questionnaire sent out and from verbal reports it was found that 50 women have redecorated an entire room, and in two cases an entire house, refinished furniture, or taken the material they had on hand and arranged it to conform with the suggestions given. After the work had been given, 254 persons changed pictures in the home, refinished furniture, papered or painted different rooms, bought new draperies, and rearranged furniture."

"Women are giving more attention to color harmony as applied to their homes and surroundings and not buying things because they are pretty in the store or because they look well in some other home."

Progress of the project: Home furnishings is one of the newer projects in Illinois and interest is growing. In 1925, a 6-months' program was carried in 9 counties and a 12-months' program was carried in 2 counties. Four counties have had girls' 4-H room-improvement clubs which have only been introduced and which require clothing work as a forerunner. Community cooperative work has been done by the specialist in four counties. Women's clubs in six counties have received services from the specialist. The specialist has worked in a total of 20 counties.- A. L. Maxwell, Home Furnishings Specialist, College of Agriculture, University of Illinois, Urbana.

Indiana

After the kitchen-improvement project in 1924, a special project, living room and bedroom, was carried in Vanderburg County.

Living rooms entered.....10
Living rooms completing project 9
Homes visited.....25

The rooms were visited and scored and the following suggestions given: Relation of size of room and window to the curtains and draperies; selection of wall paper, rugs and furniture; and the use of pillows and candles to give interesting spots of color to these rooms. The housewife was given three months to carry out the suggestions and then the rooms were scored again and placed according to the difference between the first and second scoring. The living room which placed first is in a hundred-year-old log house. The first time we visited this room it seemed that nothing could be done to it. The logs had been filled in and covered with canvas which was badly worn. Two sides of the room were papered and the other two sides were painted a bright blue. A large open fireplace, covered with brown oilcloth, was at one end of the room with an offset at the side of the window. The whole room was dark and made one cold and blue. There was very little furniture except a large walnut bed.

The old paper and canvas were torn off, the cracks were filled, and new canvas was put over the entire wall. The walls were papered a light gray, with a tiny touch of blue, rose, and silver in it. The woodwork was finished in ivory, and a window glass was put in the front door. The fireplace was made very attractive by taking out the oilcloth and painting the iron part black and the rest ivory. In the set at the side of the fireplace a delightful window seat was built. An old black chair, which had been discarded, was provided with a bright cushion and placed near the fireplace. A local furniture dealer donated three prizes to the project, one of which, a rug, went to the log house.

The second prize went to a living room in a very old house. The principal problem here was that the figures in the carpet were too large and the room had to be planned to make the carpet look less conspicuous.

The rest of the women in the project did well. They carried out the suggestions given them.- L. R. Gaddis, Home Demonstration Leader, Purdue University, La Fayette.

Iowa

As a direct result of the work accomplished in the home-furnishing project as carried by the farm women of Dallas County, 618 homes were influenced for better home management in house furnishings. According to the report of the secretary of the project the following has been done:

- 114 rugs made.
- 56 rugs selected according to suggestions.
- 245 windows redecorated.
- 325 pictures studied.
- 58 pictures discarded.
- 180 pictures selected.
- 25 pictures repaired.
- 128 walls papered or painted according to suggestions.
- 75 articles dyed.
- 91 new color schemes for rooms were adopted.
- 144 rooms rearranged.
- 150 rooms made more comfortable.
- 157 useless articles discarded.
- 265 fiber-cord baskets made.
- 15 fiber-cord trays made.
- 25 pieces of furniture refinished.

In addition to the above the project has strengthened the county extension program, developed many new leaders, and created a better spirit in the respective communities of Dallas County.

This project was undertaken largely as a result of the realization on the part of the farm women that the home is the most important part of the farm business, generally speaking, and that more specific ideas were needed in the care of the home. Before proceeding with the work of the project a definite outline was made by the county committee. This outline has been very closely adhered to throughout the year. It is submitted herewith, giving in detail the methods used, the goal, the purpose, and so forth:

Purpose:

- (1) To make homes more attractive without expenditure of money.
- (2) To develop leadership, cooperation, and community spirit.
- (3) To save time, labor, and money.
- (4) To create interest in "Own Your Own Room Clubs" for girls.
- (5) To strengthen township and county organization.

Subjects presented:

- (1) Color and design in home furnishings.
- (2) Floor coverings.
- (3) Curtains and draperies.
- (4) Pictures for the home.
- (5) Furnishing the home.

Method:

- (1) County-wide home-furnishing project will be presented in a series of five monthly meetings in charge of a specialist from Ames, who will spend five days in the county each month.
- (2) These meetings will be attended by 20 local leaders for each training school center.
- (3) The local leaders receiving instruction in the training schools will, as soon as possible after each meeting, put on a similar demonstration for the other women in their township.

Reports:

- (1) School district cooperators shall collect reports from their school districts and send them to their township chairman each month.
- (2) Township chairmen shall summarize these reports and send them to the county secretary each month.
- (3) The county secretary shall keep each month's reports on file and make a summarized report to be given at the annual meeting.

Publicity:

- (1) The county secretary shall act as a county publicity chairman.
- (2) Each township publicity chairman shall send to the county secretary material for not less than one project news item each month.

- (3) The county secretary will use this material for publicity in local, State, and agricultural papers.
- (4) The county chairman shall give publicity with regard to work to be done.
- (5) Township publicity chairmen are asked to advertise township meetings through cooperators, newspapers, and so forth. They shall announce results of work done through the same medium.

Goals:

- (1) To conduct the project in 16 townships.
- (2) To obtain 20 active local leaders at each training school center, who will take the complete course.
- (3) To have each local leader hold not less than one follow-up meeting a month for 7 months.
- (4) To have each local leader reach an average of 10 women each month.
- (5) To reach at least 75 homes in each township with some phase of the work.
- (6) To present a project exhibit at the tri-county fair at Perry.
- (7) To begin now to plan a project exhibit at the State fair.

All the 16 townships of the county except Washington were included in this project. The training school method was used with the following results:

- 5 training schools held.
- 15 active township leaders attended training schools.
- 83 local leaders were active in this work.
- 107 school district cooperators.
- 95 township committee meetings were held.
- 395 meetings held by local leaders.
- 3,525 people attended meetings held by local leaders.
- 106 other meetings presented the project.
- 2,094 people adopted the suggestions presented in the various meetings and demonstrations.

The success of the project is largely due to the efficient manner in which the county project committee functioned under the leadership of Mrs. W. H. Royer, county project leader. In addition to having been of inestimable value to the farm home and the community life of Dallas County, this project has had no small part in strengthening the county organization extension program and is another illustration of what can be accomplished by a definite outline and efficient management on the part of the county committee when good leadership is available.- Harry E. Codlin, County Agent, Dallas Center, Dallas County.

Maryland

In 1925 three clubs in the county took up the house-furnishing project for the first time. A great deal of illustrative material was obtained by writing to reliable firms for their booklets on furniture, draperies, paints, and so forth, but it was found that this material had to be used with discretion as some of the illustrations were almost as bad, artistically, as some of the rooms we were trying to rearrange.

The programs of the clubs taking up this project indicate the general nature of the talks and demonstrations given. The points emphasized most were the desirability for simplicity in furnishings, treatment of walls and floors as backgrounds, how to obtain pleasing color harmonies, the placing of furniture for both beautiful and useful effects, and the difference between real lasting beauty and mere prettiness in decoration. Instruction was also given in how to hang pictures, do over old floors and furniture, and so on. As a result many rooms have already been rearranged and several requests have come for assistance in doing over others. In all these lessons emphasis has been placed on the possibilities of working with what you already have, and the house-furnishing booth at the fair was an example of what could be done with made over or homemade furnishings.- Margaret Smith, Home Demonstration Agent, Hagerstown, Washington County.

Missouri

The ultimate State goal in the home-management project is for 50 per cent of the farms to have their grounds well planted and well kept; to have the houses and outbuildings in good repair and painted; to have the interiors decorated in good taste and adequately and comfortably furnished with simple furnishings; and to have the furnishings well arranged.

The State goal for 1925 was to have an average of 100 homes improved in the counties where work was continued; to have an average of 60 homes improved in the counties beginning the work; and to have 2 community houses or grounds improved in each county.

The specialist assisted the home demonstration agents in getting the programs started in the communities continuing the work and in giving assistance to the home demonstrators when so requested. Three demonstrators were procured, one for grounds and two for rooms, in each new community taking up the work. The ones who began the work the year previous were urged and encouraged to continue until their homes were livable and attractive.

Several counties united in providing two sets of slides to be used in illustrating talks on improving home grounds. These sets of slides passed around among the home demonstration agents, who presented this part of the work. The home demonstration agents also gave four lecture demonstrations featuring the improvement of the interior.

In the county agent counties, with one exception, the work was all given by the specialist. Two or more demonstrators were obtained in each community at the first meeting to discuss improving the grounds. Sets of colored slides were used in presenting the work for both exterior and interior. The forenoons were taken up with visiting the homes of the demonstrators to offer suggestions. These were always by request.

Responsibility for carrying forward the work of this project was divided among county extension agents, the project and local leaders, and the specialist.

The specialist outlined plans, prepared report forms and advance publicity, supplied subject matter for local leaders and home demonstration agents, made suggestions as to follow-up and local publicity, trained leaders, assisted demonstrators with plans, and attended tours.

The county extension agent located communities where work was to be given, helped obtain demonstrators, rendered all assistance possible to project and local leaders, provided report forms, procured and summarized reports, and planned and attended tours.

The project leader made arrangements for local meetings and advertised them, encouraged and assisted demonstrators, obtained reports, and assisted with tours.

The local leaders attended training schools, passed the work on to others in their group, saw that demonstration material was passed on to another group or returned to the agent's office, reported on work done, and assisted and encouraged demonstrators.

The demonstrator agreed to make, and did make, certain specific improvements, to report changes made, and to show results when the tour was made.

Reports from five home demonstration agent counties working on this project show that 1,330 homes were improved on the inside. Two counties did some work on the project but made no report.

Three agricultural agent counties reported 338 homes making improvement on the inside.

The following is a summary of the work done in house furnishings:

1,371 women enrolled.

1,668 completed the work.

121 result demonstrations started and

117 or 96 per cent completed.

624 women adopted improved practices in selecting and arranging furniture.

762 made changes in walls, woodwork, or floors.

The following were materially changed:

801 bedrooms.

704 living rooms.

578 dining rooms.

302 other rooms.

Prizes offered by community fair associations for exhibits have proved of value in advancing the work of this project. Miniature houses, open on the side to show well-decorated rooms, properly furnished with furniture placed right have created much interest.- Julia Rocheford, Home Management Specialist, College of Agriculture, University of Missouri, Columbia.

New York

Two lectures on house furnishings were given at Summit Park. The people who compose this group are moderately well to do and can afford to make additions to their homes every year. Several women spoke of searching their magazines and stores in an effort to find the suitable additions to make to their homes. They found this searching very confusing, so much so that they scarcely knew what to buy for each magazine and salesman seemed to contradict the other. This made the women anxious to have sufficient background so that they would not be helplessly dependent on others.

The first lecture given at Summit Park was on the principles of good design, line, balance, and arrangement, and their application to house-furnishings. The fact brought before the women was that placing the large pieces of furniture according to the structural lines of the room instead of "kitty-corner" made for spaciousness. The different kinds of balance and where to use each, not only in room arrangement but in placing decorations, were also shown. The women showed keen interest in furniture grouping for the various rooms.

The use, arrangement, selection, and placing of pictures was discussed. One woman after hearing a similar talk removed all the pictures from the various rooms and rearranged them according to space. She said that she had never realized until then what a difference placing even one picture correctly meant in the appearance of a room.

Large photographs of rooms were used to illustrate the various points touched in the discussion.

The women were urged to tell of problems they had at home, and a discussion of how to solve them followed. The women became so interested that it was necessary to hold over a part of the questions until the next meeting. Their principal difficulty was the type of draperies to use.

The second lecture outlined fully the use of color and its psychological and emotional effects. It explained how to obtain color harmonies, and how to obtain color harmony in a room already furnished. The women were told to remember that each room is like a picture with furniture as the foreground, draperies as the middle distance, and the walls as the background, and that a harmonious unity throughout the house is essential.

At Jefferson-Humboldt unit the first home-furnishings lecture was on arrangement and line. It was given at the home of one of the women who asked that criticisms be made of her things and how they were placed, and suggestions be given as to what she could do to make her home just as attractive as possible. The women enjoyed this method of working out their lesson on home furnishings as they gained so much by actually seeing the furnishings arranged. A number told of their own problems and asked for help to remedy them.

A lecture on color was also given at the home of one of the women. Strips of wall paper representing the different kinds to use in the various rooms and swatches of materials which could be used for draperies were shown. A series of different color combinations and how they could work them out in their own homes was emphasized. If one color predominated in a room, how to choose colors which would harmonize with it and the amounts and places to use each was also discussed. In this home the furniture was rearranged.- Katherine N. Britt, Home Demonstration Agent, 220 Franklin Street, City of Buffalo.

North Carolina

Since coming to Rowan County I have tried to stimulate greater interest in beautifying the interior of the homes. At first the women did not seem to be interested, but this year five clubs, totaling 90 members, chose house furnishings as their major project.

When I discussed the selection and use of wall paper, I took with me samples for illustration. When I talked about colors for painted walls, I suggested a uniform color scheme and colors which were light and cheerful instead of the favorite "gloom haunt" neutral gray. I talked on the uses of linoleum as a floor covering and the selection and placing of rugs. A decorator from a local furniture store went with me to each of the clubs. He took samples of rugs with him and gave instructive talks about how rugs are made and how they should be cared for.

The women seemed to enjoy the furniture phase of the project most, as we had some very good material to work with. Pieces of old furniture which had been discarded were refinished and restored to use. I taught the women how to remove the numerous coats of paint and varnish from the furniture and how to apply a finish. As soon as the furniture in a club was finished, we met and arranged a room. Here is where I fought real battles to keep the furniture from being placed across the corners and along diagonal lines, but I insisted it follow the lines of the room.

Curtains, draperies, pictures, small furnishings, and so forth were discussed. Interest was renewed, and in the spring it seemed that every woman wanted to make new curtains. This gave me a chance to bring out color and color schemes. I have talked cretonne and unbleached muslin dyed until I feel that every home in the county should be using one or the other.

A local furniture store cooperated in the project by sending a decorator with me to each club to give demonstrations and answer questions. The decorator became so interested in what we were doing that he suggested a house-furnishing contest, and the first week in May representatives from five clubs made daily visits to the store to study the work. Five living rooms, 12 by 18 feet, were arranged on the second floor of a store building. These five rooms were identical in size, lighting, and other physical characteristics, but when they were opened to the public they looked as if five different families were living in them. Maude E. Wallace, assistant State agent, and Martha C. Creighton, district agent, scored the rooms. Miss Wallace talked to about 200 people who were present. She gave very constructive criticisms on all the rooms and brought out some very interesting points, especially regarding color and arrangement.

Mrs. W. D. Graham, president of the club which won the first prize, completely rearranged her large living room after this contest. She is the mother of 13 children, 10 of whom are boys, and her new living room provides an attractive setting for her splendid family. Mrs. Graham painted the walls and floors and bought new rugs and cretonne draperies. She refinished an old secretary, a console table and mirror, a reading lamp, and several chairs, and these with a davenport, a bookcase, and a radio furnish a comfortable and attractive living room.- M. Edna Edwards, Home Demonstration Agent, Salisbury, Rowan County.

Wyoming

The goal for 1925 in the house-furnishing project was as follows:

- (1) To conduct living-room demonstrations in Albany, Laramie, and Platte Counties; such demonstrations to result in the improvement of the living room in no less than 10 homes. Living-room demonstrations were conducted in all three of these counties and definite reports which have been received indicate that the goal has been reached.
- (2) To organize one "fix-up-a-room" club, this club to enroll not less than five members. A club was organized in Park County with four members.

The living-room demonstration work, which is a direct outgrowth of the kitchen-improvement contests, was conducted in Albany, Laramie, and Park Counties. In Albany and Park Counties method demonstrations were given in homes where the women were willing to allow their living rooms to be used as a demonstration to the rest of the community. Talks were given on the fundamental principles of furniture arrangement, placing of rugs, and picture hanging. The actual demonstration of many of the principles was presented at the method demonstrations, as pictures were rehung, and furniture was moved to more suitable places or set straight with the wall. Information was given on wall coloring and suggestions were made for curtains, draperies, and pillows.

One of the outstanding demonstrations was held in Albany County. When the State leader went to the home of the demonstrator she found enlarged photographs hung almost to the ceiling, furniture placed across corners, and the room literally covered with photographs, pillows, and coyote hides. The woman in whose home the demonstration was given had been in the kitchen-improvement contest, and was personally acquainted with the State leader. She suggested that we do whatever was necessary to make the room more attractive. All but one of the large photographs were removed and other pictures were rehung. The furniture was placed to give balance and unity. Thirty-six photographs, which had stood for many years on top of the bookcase, numerous superfluous pillows, and so forth, were discarded. When the demonstration was completed, the women all remarked how restful and homelike the room appeared. This demonstration did not cost any money. The other demonstrations were similar, although in several instances the women purchased new furnishings to add to the attractiveness of the room.- Luella P. Sherman, Acting State Home Demonstration Leader, College of Agriculture, University of Wyoming, Laramie.

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